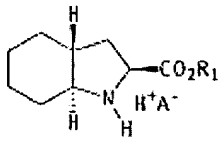
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (original) A method for the synthesis of a compound of formula I as a mixture of enantiomers,



(I)

(wherein R_1 is H or an acid protective group and H^+A^- indicates an optional acid with which the compound of formula I may form an ammonium salt)

said method comprising;

A) reacting a cyclohexyl aziridine with a dialkyl malonate, whereby to provide a trans-fused 3-alkylcarbonyl-octahydro-indol-2-one;

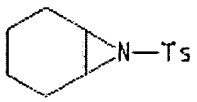
B) decarbonylation at the 3-position, conversion of the ketone of the resulting trans-octahydro-indol-2-one to an optionally protected carboxylic acid group; and

C) optionally removing any N-substitution if necessary.

2. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said mixture of enantiomers consists of more than 50:50 (2S, 3aR, 7aS):(2R, 3aS, 7aR).

3. (original) A method as claimed in claim 2 wherein step A and/or step B is carried out in the presence of a chiral auxiliary.

4. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 wherein said cyclohexyl aziridine is

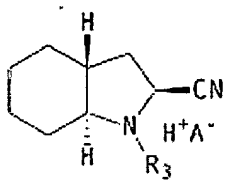


5. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1 wherein said dialkylmalonate is diethylmalonate.

6. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1 wherein decarbonylation is carried out by heating said trans-fused 3-alkylcarbonyl-octahydro-indol-2-one in the presence of a halide salt and subsequently hydrolysing.

7. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1 wherein conversion of said ketone to an optionally protected carboxylic acid comprises the reduction of said ketone to an alcohol moiety, followed by the stereoselective

conversion of said alcohol moiety to a nitrile compound of formula II, followed by conversion of said nitrile compound to an optionally protected carboxylic acid;



(II)

wherein H^+A^- are as defined in claim 1 and R_3 is H or a leaving group.

8. (original) A method as claimed in claim 7 wherein said stereoselective conversion of said alcohol moiety to a nitrile compound of formula II is carried out in the presence of a metal halide.

9. (original) A method as claimed in claim 8 wherein said metal halide is tin tetrachloride, titanium tetrachloride or iron trichloride.

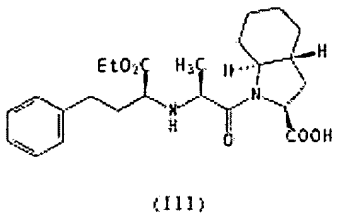
10. (currently amended) A method for the formation of a compound of formula III comprising forming a compound of formula I by a method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 9~~ claim 1 followed by;

i) amide formation with an activated acid of formula IV or V;

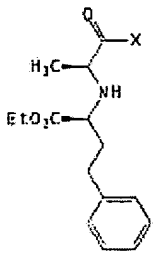
ii) separation of enantiomers by conversion to diastereoisomers and separation thereof;

iii) removal of any protecting group at R_1 such that R_1 is hydrogen;

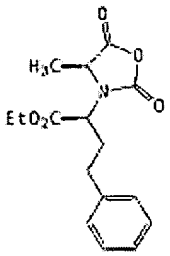
wherein steps i) to iii) may be carried out in any order and the conversion to diastereoisomers in step ii) may be by means of the amide formation of step i);



(III)



(IV)



(V)

wherein X is OH or an acid activating group.

11. (original) A method as claimed in claim 10 wherein the protecting group at R_1, if present, is a benzyl group.

12. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of claims 10 to 11~~ claim 10 wherein diastereomer separation is carried out via reaction with O,O'-dibenzoyl-L-tartaric acid.

13. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of claims 10 to 12~~ claim 10 wherein the steps are carried out in the order (i), (iii) and (ii).

14. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of claims 10 to 12~~ claim 10 wherein the steps are carried out in the order (ii), (i) and (iii).

15. (currently amended) An intermediate of formula I as defined in claim 1, formed by a method as ~~claimed in any of claims 1 to 9~~ defined above.

16. (currently amended) An intermediate of formula II as defined in claim 7, formed by a method as ~~claimed in claim 7 to 9~~ defined above.

17. (currently amended) Trandolapril having formula III as defined in claim 10 formed by a method as ~~claimed in claim 10 to 14~~ defined above.